



The New River Improvement Project



A Project of the California Mexico Border Relations Council and the City of Calexico

Technical Advisory Committee Meeting

Calexico Community Center
707 Dool Ave.
Calexico, California 92231

Wednesday
July 8, 2010
2:00 p.m.

MEETING NOTES

- Welcome and Introductions.** The New River Improvement Project Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Chair Ricardo Martinez (California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA)) called the meeting to order at 2:10 p.m. and welcomed the committee members to their first meeting. In attendance were the following committee members: Luis Estrada (City of Calexico), Miguel Figueroa (Calexico New River Committee), Ema Rosa Silva (Calexico Community Representative), Jose Angel (Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board (CRBRWQCB)), Ed DeMesa (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers), Roger Dunn, (San Diego State University (SDSU)), Jon Ballard (General Services Administration (GSA)), Linsey Dale (Imperial County Farm Bureau), Jose Olmedo (Comite Civico del Valle), and Frank Gonzalez (CalTrans). Also in attendance were: Anna Morales and Robert Cardenas (both representing the International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC) until that organization's representative is determined), Carlos Angulo (CalEPA), and the facilitative team of Carl Nettleton and Gabriela Coverdale. Not in attendance were invited committee members Ralph Cordova (County of Imperial – who has nominated Andy Horne as his designee), Erika Contreras (Office of Manuel Perez), Kim Nicol (California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG)), Leon Lesicka (Citizens Congressional Task Force on the New River), Anthony Sanchez (Imperial Irrigation District (IID)). The TAC roster and other contact information are attached.
- Background (i.e. AB 1079).** Ricardo Martinez provided a brief background on AB 1079 and turned the meeting over to facilitator Carl Nettleton.
- Technical Advisory Committee Mission and Vision.** A proposed TAC mission and vision were presented (on the draft fact sheet handout - attached).
- Proposed Key Principles.** The proposed key principles guiding the project were presented - attached)
- Proposed Work Plan.** A graphic explaining the proposed workflow and milestones was presented and discussed – attached). The discussion of the work plan included

decisions about the composition of the work groups, and a brief view of proposed missions (attached in draft fact sheet).

6. There was a strong emphasis on the importance of everyone working as a team on a very tight schedule to have the Strategic Plan completed by November 2010.
7. **Work Group Members.** Each TAC member was asked to be on at least one of the three Work Groups. Chairs and Vice Chairs were nominated. These are the results:
 - a. Impairments and Remediation Work Group.
 - i. Jose Angel (Chair)
 - ii. Ed DeMesa (Vice Chair)
 - iii. Luis Estrada
 - iv. Linsey Dale
 - v. Luis Olmedo
 - vi. Ema Silva
 - vii. Frank Gonzalez
 - viii. Leon Lesicka
 - ix. The IBWC representative will be asked
 - x. The IID representative will be asked
 - b. River Park Visioning Work Group.
 - i. Miguel Figueroa (Chair)
 - ii. Roger Dunn (Vice Chair)
 - iii. Jon Ballard
 - iv. Frank Gonzalez
 - v. Ema Silva
 - vi. Non-TAC members nominated
 1. Armando Villa (City of Calexico)
 - vii. Non-TAC members to be nominated
 1. County of Imperial representative (Planning Department?)
 2. Vecinos of the New River
 - c. Funding and Background Work Group.
 - i. Ricardo Martinez (Interim Chair – represented by Dan Garza)
 - ii. County of Imperial Ralph Cordova? (or representative to be asked to chair)
 - iii. Jon Ballard
 - iv. Luis Estrada
 - v. Ed DeMesa
 - vi. Linsey Dale
 - vii. Erika Contreras was suggested
 - viii. Non-TAC members to be nominated
 1. Representatives of all federal agencies with regulatory, planning or funding roles

8. **Initial funding sources.** To help advise the committee of the status of existing funding sources that are or might be available, the following list was presented:
 - a. \$400,000 State Water Resources Control Board (allocated and appropriated)
 - b. \$800,000 Proposition 84 Bond Funding via AB 1079 (allocated awaiting bond sale prioritization)
 - c. \$3,200,000 Federal Transportation Equity Act via AB 1079 (allocated and awaiting for City of Calexico's request)
 - d. \$20,000,000 Water Bond Initiative (scheduled for November elections but might be delayed until 2012)
 - e. \$20,000,000 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (allocated but not appropriated, awaiting project development and procedural steps)
 - f. \$700,000 Funding through Senator Boxer (to be better defined)
9. **Draft Table of Contents.** A draft table of contents was presented (attached). The table of contents was developed from the AB 1079 legislation and a facilitated sessions with community members in February 2010. Several of the sections of the table of contents are the responsibility of the Work Groups. Others are the responsibility of the Technical Advisory Committee as a whole to arrive at options and recommendations. A draft of the Strategic Plan will begin taking shape within the next two – to – three weeks and will evolve as the Work Groups complete their assignments.
10. **Schedule of Meetings.** A schedule of meetings (new schedule attached) was reviewed and the following decisions were made:
 - a. TAC meetings will be held every other Thursday from noon until 6 p.m.
 - b. The next TAC meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 20, 2010, at noon, to allow those who need to attend the Calexico City Council meeting that evening.
 - c. Steering committee conference calls will be held on alternate Thursdays at 10 a.m.
 - d. Work Groups will meet as often as needed but will bring together key information in a facilitated discussion following each TAC meeting.
 - e. The schedule for each meeting date will look like this:
 - i. Noon – 2:00 p.m. – TAC meeting/working lunch
 - ii. 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
 1. Funding and Background Work Group
 2. Impairments and Remediation Work Group
 - iii. 4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. – River Park Visioning Work Group
 - f. The possibility of having teleconferences using Skype or other teleconferencing software will be explored.
11. **Public meetings.** A discussion about how to best provide information and gain feedback from the residents of the City of Calexico and other interested or affected communities resulted in the following suggestions:
 - a. Provide information to neighborhood leaders who can join together to distribute information.

- b. Create flyers for the west side neighborhoods in both English and Spanish and work to have them distributed through known leaders.
- c. Meetings should show the reality.
- d. Have interpreters available.
- e. Conduct public meetings at multiple times (morning and afternoon).
- f. Hold at least one meeting downstream and test multiple locations (i.e. El Centro, Brawley, and/or Holtville, as well as Calexico).
- g. The conference room at the Farm Bureau in El Centro is available as a meeting site.
- h. Have good visuals so the community can see what you are proposing.
- i. Use creative ways to show the New River Improvement Project is not the same old thing.
- j. Show we are building on what's already been done.
- k. Market valley-wide.
- l. Use billboards if necessary to reach some audiences.
- m. Add outreach tasks to the River Park Visioning Work Group.
- n. Make PowerPoint presentation available to committee (attached).

12. Protocol for Public and Media Interface. A discussion about how to handle media requests resulted in the following initial decisions:

- a. Initially, calls will be handled by Chair Ricardo Martinez
- b. The River Park Visioning Work Group will consider an overall policy
- c. The group agreed on the importance of bringing concerns and issues to the TAC to reinforce how we work together to solve problems.
- d. A media announcement will likely be released after the July 20 TAC and Work Group meetings.
- e. Linsey Dale hosts a Farm Bureau radio show that might be forum for information.
- f. Spectrum Advertising may have pro bono time slots available.

13. Additional TAC Suggestions. Several other comments were brought forward at the meeting:

- a. Be clear on what level of detail we are seeking. That will drive the work.
- b. Recognize the difference between a government approach and a community approach and that what we are doing is merging those approaches together.

14. Next Steps. A discussion of important next steps resulted in the following:

- a. GIS Data and Background Maps. Because a good portion of the strategic plan development process will involve visuals and mapping, initial base maps of land ownership, vegetation types, land use, and other factors will be necessary ASAP to show at the July 20 meeting. The following were suggested as sources and all TAC members were asked to provide information at their first opportunity:
 - i. Regional Water Quality Control Board (contact Jose)
 - ii. Calexico New River Committee (Miguel)

- iii. University of Redlands
- iv. Salton Sea Authority
- v. Imperial Irrigation District
- vi. California Department of Fish and Game
- vii. Imperial County Planning Department
- viii. City of Calexico Planning Department
- ix. General Services Administration (Ed DeMesa will check)
- x. U.S. Army Corp of Engineers (Ed DeMesa)
- xi. SDSU Geology Department
- xii. State of California's CERES web site
- xiii. State Water Resources Control Board
- xiv. U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
- xv. U.S. Geological Survey

All TAC members to provide information to Gabriela Coverdale ASAP so initial maps can be prepared for the July 20 meeting.

gabriela@nettstrategies.com
858-663-0021

Hard copies to;
Nettleton Strategies
P.O. Box 22971
San Diego, CA 92192-2971

- b. Determine who would add value to the Work Groups. Work groups should quickly assess who might be needed on their work groups to complete their tasks.
- c. Approve Charter at the next meeting. A proposed charter containing the TAC vision and mission, work group missions, key principles, deliverables, and other elements discussed will be provided to the committee for review and to consider approving at the next meeting.
- d. Next Meeting Agenda. The base agenda for the July 20 meeting will be as follows and will be the model for shaping a standard agenda for TAC meetings.
 - i. Welcome and Introductions
 - ii. Presentation of Initial Maps
 - iii. Work Group Updates
 - 1. Impairments and Remediation Work Group
 - a. Initial work plan

- b. Work to-date
- 2. River Park Visioning Work Group
 - a. Initial work plan
 - b. Work to-date
- 3. Funding and Background Work Group
 - a. Initial work plan
 - b. Work to-date
- 4. Review and Approve Charter
- 5. Reminder of Next Meetings
- 6. Adjournment

15. **TAC Contact Point.** Although communications between TAC members is encouraged. All official information (i.e. meeting notices, agendas, etc.) will be provided through CalEPA. A reliable point to make contact with suggested agenda changes or other suggestions will be:

Trevor Taniguchi
Executive Fellow
California Environmental Protection Agency
ttaniguchi@calepa.ca.gov
916-324-7582

16. **Adjournment.** The meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:30 p.m.